

Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Original) A production method of a sequentially joined-segment stator coil of a rotary electric machine comprising:

preparing segments each including a head and a pair of legs extending straight in parallel to each other from ends of the head, the head being made up of a substantially U-shaped tip portion and a pair of head straight portions extending from the tip portion in alignment with the legs;

preparing a plurality of rings arrayed coaxially with each other to be rotatable relative to each other;

holding the legs of each of the segments in the rings, respectively;

catching the tip portion of the head of each of the segments through a pair of tines in abutment to the tip portion in a circumferential direction of said rings, the tines being installed on a head press member which is disposed away from said rings in an axial direction of the rings and so designed as to be movable selectively to and away from said rings;

moving said head press member toward said rings and, at the same time, rotating said rings in opposite directions to spread the legs of each of the segments through a given angle, thereby twisting the head straight portions of each of the heads to form head slant portions;

removing said segments from the rings and the tines and inserting said segments into slots in a stator core; and

joining said segments in said stator core in sequence to complete a stator coil,

wherein the head press member retains each of the pairs of tines to be rotatable about an axis extending in alignment with an axis about which the rings rotate, each of the pairs of tines being allowed to rotate following rotation of the rings.

2. (Original) A sequentially joined-segment stator coil of a rotary electric machine produced by the production method as set forth in claim 1, wherein an angle, as measured from a vertex defined on an axis of the stator coil, between a center of the tip portion of the head of each of the segments as defined in a circumferential direction of the stator coil and an outer one of the legs of the segment is smaller than an angle between said center and an inner one of the legs.

3. (Currently Amended) A production method of a sequentially joined-segment stator coil of a rotary electric ~~machine-machine~~, comprising:

preparing segments each including a head and a pair of legs extending straight in parallel to each other from ends of the head, the head being made up of a substantially U-shaped tip portion and a pair of head straight portions extending from the tip portion in alignment with the legs;

preparing a plurality of rings arrayed coaxially with each other to be rotatable relative to each other;

holding the legs of each of the segments in the rings, respectively;

catching the tip portion of the head of each of the segments through a pair of tines in abutment to the tip portion in a circumferential direction of said rings, the tines being installed on a head press member which is disposed away from said rings in an axial direction of the rings and so designed as to be movable selectively to and away from said rings;

moving said head press member toward said rings and, at the same time, rotating said rings in opposite directions to spread the legs of each of the segments through a

given angle, thereby twisting the head straight portions of each of the heads to form head slant portions;

removing said segments from the rings and the tines and inserting said segments into slots in a stator core; and

joining said segments in said stator core in sequence to complete a stator coil,

wherein one of each pair of the tines which is urged inwardly of the rings by the tip portion of the head of a corresponding one of the segments has a first chamfered surface to abut to the tip portion, and the other tine which is urged outward of the rings by the tip portion of the head of the corresponding one of the segments has a second chamfered surface to abut to the tip portion, the first chamfered surface being greater in area-radius of curvature than the second chamfered surface.

4-7. (Canceled)

8. (New) A production method as set forth in claim 3, wherein said segments are broken down into a plurality of segment groups each of which is made up of sets of the segments arrayed in a circumferential direction of the rings, the segment groups being arrayed in a radius direction of the rings.

9. (New) A production method as set forth in claim 8, wherein each of the sets of the segments includes a small-sized segment and a large-sized segment which is placed to extend over the small-sized segment.